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Agenda item 9
Adoption of the report of the Committee on the work of its forty-third session

Rapporteur: Mr. Jerry **Kramer** (Canada)

Addendum

Coordination questions: New Partnership for Africa's Development

Item 5 (b)

Future engagement of the United Nations system with the New Partnership for Africa's Development

1. At its 3rd and 5th meetings on 9 and 10 June 2003 the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the report of the Secretary-General on the future engagement of the United Nations system with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/AC.51/2003/6).

2. The Director of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa introduced the report and responded to questions raised during the Committee's consideration of the report at the 3rd and 5th meetings. The representative of the Economic Commission for Africa provided clarifications in response to questions. The Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa responded to the questions raised by the Committee at its 5th meeting, on 10 June 2003.

Discussion

3. Much appreciation was expressed for the report on the future engagement of the United Nations system with the New Partnership for Africa's Development, which was considered as useful in highlighting the evolving nature and scope of the activities of the United Nations system in support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

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4. It was noted, that in its resolution 57/7, the General Assembly had welcomed NEPAD as the framework around which the international community, including the United Nations system should organize its support for Africa's development. It was an African-designed and African-led initiative, based on the principles of ownership and partnership, owned by African Governments and peoples. It also required international partnership for its successful implementation. NEPAD was a vehicle for Africa's economic and social development and integration.

5. The United Nations system had an important role to play in realizing the objectives of NEPAD. Noting General Assembly resolution 57/7, in particular paragraphs 24 to 33, delegations emphasized the need for the agencies of the United Nations system to enhance the coherence of, and their collaboration and coordination in their work. In this regard, satisfaction was expressed at the use of existing programming and coordination tools at the national, regional and global levels. Satisfaction was also expressed at the important coordinating role of the Economic Commission for Africa in the regional consultative meetings of United Nations agencies working in Africa.

6. Note was taken of the cluster approach adopted by the regional consultative meetings as a vehicle for coordinated response by the United Nations system, and the role envisaged for conveners of the relevant clusters. Questions were raised about some of the agencies assigned to convene certain clusters. It was suggested that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) should have been the convener of the cluster for agriculture, trade and market access; and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for the cluster on environment, population and urbanization. It was also stressed that the scope of the cluster on peace and security should be widened to include mass education and literacy of the poor. It was stated that care should be taken so that inter-agency rivalry should not be allowed to hinder inter-agency cooperation in support of the implementation of NEPAD. Clarification was provided to the effect that conveners were considered facilitators rather than lead agencies. It was pointed out that UNCTAD was the lead agency for the sub-cluster on market access and UNEP for the sub-cluster on environment.

7. It was widely acknowledged that African countries should take a lead role in mobilizing resources for the implementation of NEPAD. They should adopt policies and measures to stimulate domestic savings, as well as to attract foreign direct investment and portfolio flows. At the same time, Africa's development partners could play an important supportive role, by increasing official development assistance and reforming the modalities for its disbursement, by granting debt cancellation and by providing trade concessions. In that regard, action to lift customs duties and quantitative restrictions on imports from, and to cancel the debt of, the least developed countries was noted.

8. One of the most significant impediments to the development of Africa was the persistence of conflicts in Africa. More effort needed to be exerted by African countries, as well as the international community, at conflict prevention, resolution and management in the region. Weak economic growth was another constraint. A preliminary report on the economic performance of Africa in 2002 showed that out of the 53 countries in the region only five had achieved a growth rate of 7 per cent and five had registered a negative growth rate. Such uneven performance

foreshadowed the difficulty that Africa would have in attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

9. The establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa was welcomed as an important secretariat support structure for NEPAD at United Nations Headquarters, as envisaged in resolution 57/7. The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa would assist the Secretary-General in his advocacy role, facilitate coherence and coordination in the work of the United Nations at Headquarters and complement coordination at the national and regional levels. It was observed that the Office of the Special Adviser should be strengthened through the provision of adequate human and financial resources.

10. The view was expressed that ownership of development processes by African countries played a critical role in their success. It was noted that, at the end of September 2003, Japan would hold the third Tokyo International Conference on African Development to support NEPAD by mobilizing international resources and expanding global partnership. The hope was expressed that the deliberations there would further strengthen international efforts for African development.

11. The view was expressed that there was a need to align some clusters more closely with those United Nations agencies that had the technical and institutional comparative advantage on particular issues, and that the possibility should be considered of involving additional agencies, such as UNCTAD with regard to trade-related issues and UNEP with regard to the Action Plan of Environment Initiative of NEPAD.

Conclusions and recommendations

12. **The Committee took note and welcomed with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on future engagement of the United Nations system with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/AC.51/2003/6).**

13. **The Committee also stressed that NEPAD was an initiative designed and owned by African Governments and peoples and was a genuine call for a new relationship based on constructive partnership, and emphasized that NEPAD is a holistic and integrated initiative for the social and economic development of Africa.**

14. **The Committee welcomed the implementation of NEPAD as a work in progress. It also noted that the United Nations system had demonstrated a strong commitment to NEPAD and had developed an operational framework to support NEPAD at the national, regional and global levels.**

15. **The Committee also welcomed the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, at the level of Under-Secretary-General. It further stressed that the mandate of the Office of the Special Adviser should be matched with adequate resources, in accordance with paragraph 26 of General Assembly resolution 57/300 of 20 December 2002, to enable the Office to function efficiently and effectively, as well as to have a positive impact on the implementation of NEPAD.**

16. **The Committee reiterated that support for NEPAD, as mandated by the General Assembly in paragraphs 7 and 29 of its resolution 57/7 of 4 November 2002, required that all organizations of the United Nations system work**

together in partnership with the African Union and other regional and subregional organizations to ensure the full and effective implementation of the objectives of NEPAD.

17. **The Committee recommended that relevant organizations of the United Nations system should assume the role of convener, consistent with their fields of competence and capacity, while complying with the need to avoid inter-agency rivalry, strengthening coordination and collaboration, in order to ensure their effective involvement in providing added value to the implementation of NEPAD. In this regard, the Committee stressed that the coordination function should be carried out at the regional and subregional levels by the Economic Commission for Africa and should be closely coordinated by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa.**

18. **The Committee also emphasized the continued importance of the role of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination in its system-wide coordination functions with respect to NEPAD. In this regard, the Committee stressed the need for the Board to keep under regular review the issue of inter-agency coordination on NEPAD.**

19. **The Committee further recommended that, in order for it to continue monitoring work in progress in support of NEPAD, the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to report to the Committee at its forty-fourth session on further future engagement of the United Nations system with NEPAD.**

20. **The Committee also recommended that the General Assembly requests the Secretary-General to submit, annually, a progress report on the implementation of NEPAD, for consideration by the General Assembly under the relevant agenda item.**